[African Americans] Kenneth Whitney

CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE HISTORY OF EVANSTON AND ITS PUBLIC SCHOOLS FROM AN AFRICAN-AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE

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AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON
AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY
MAY 8, 1992

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A. INTRODUCTION

This project was undertaken by a few members of the District 65 Long Range Planning Committee ("LRPC") who came together on their own and as an ad-hoc committee with the common goal of documenting the African-American perspective on certain historical events pertaining to our City and its public schools.

By this report, the committee members hope to and have attempted to:

- Provide additional historical background information concerning race relations in the City in general and in its public schools in particular;
- Record the African-American perspective on a number of relevant events and developments;
- Address certain widely held "historical notions" we believe are of questionable validity pertaining to the City's public school history including, the notions that: (1) Evanston public school authorities never practiced racial discrimination; and (2) the Evanston Community "voluntarily" desegregated its public schools; and
- Increase the Community's awareness of certain historical events which to some extent explain why various segments of the Community oftentimes view recent events and developments differently.

Notwithstanding the above, it should be clear that this report is not designed to question or take issue with factual statements concerning the District's history which are contained in the main report. Rather, we hope that the information contained herein will be viewed as supplemental. Finally, by no means do we wish to imply or represent that this report tells the "entire story" and we strongly encourage those who follow to pursue the story as well as to document it.

The primary sources for much of what is contained in this report were oral recollections of African-American senior citizens who have resided in Evanston for 40 years or more. These individuals were, by and large, former Evanston public school students, parents, teachers, administrators and ordinary observers (hereinafter to referred to as "our sources"). Much of what our sources conveyed is not reflected on the shelves of local libraries, in back issues of the Evanston Review or in the files of the school district(s). For this reason, we took the approach of

not including what we considered to be statements of significant fact unless two or more sources could verify the statements. Since we were dealing with recollections for the most part, our sources generally noted that some of the dates mentioned may not be entirely accurate. Notwithstanding, we do not believe that possible errors in dates should detract from the substance of what is contained below.

B. SOME PRE-1950 HISTORY

The picture painted by our sources of race relations in Evanston up through the 1950's was not a pretty one. This state of race relations was obviously a product of the times and was more the rule, rather than the exception, throughout the United States during this period, even in the north.

Housing was segregated along racial lines. The public schools were largely segregated along racial lines. For a long period of time, African-American teachers were assigned to teach at only one school. Northwestern University prohibited African-Americans from living in campus housing and competing in intercollegiate athletics. African-American girls could not shower in the same stalls as white girls after gym at the High School. African-Americans held virtually no jobs of significance in city government, with the city's major employers, including, Northwestern University, Washington National Insurance Company, American Hospital Supply, or the major establishments in the central/downtown business district. The city's two major hospitals did not treat African-American patients. A number of eating and lodging establishments refused to serve African-American customers. It was not uncommon for African-American boys at the high school to receive lectures reminding them that inter-racial dating was not acceptable. There were separate senior proms for African-Americans and whites; and there were segregated lake front beach areas. African-Americans had to sit in the balcony of the city's two main movie theaters (i.e. the Valencia and the Varsity), there was a YMCA for whites and a YMCA for African-Americans, and the number of African-American policemen and firemen could all be counted on one hand. Moreover, while contacts between African-Americans and whites were minimized in housing, education and employment, they were virtually non-existent on a social level. According to one of our sources, "when we say there was another 100 years of apartheid after 350 years of slavery, this is what we're talking about."

According to the 1860 U.S Census for Evanston, there were two African-Americans in

Evanston's total population of 831. Both were female domestics. According to the 1900 U.S. Census, there were 737 African-Americans living in Evanston at the turn of the Century. The 1910 U.S. Census reveals that there were 1160 African-Americans in a total population of 24,978; and the 1920 U.S. Census reveals that there were 2522 African-Americans in a total population of 37,234.

The following is a schedule which provides a racial breakdown of Evanston's population during the period between 1900 - 1990.

CITY OF EVANSTON CENSUS DATA

(Racial Breakdown of Population)

	WHITE	AFRICAN-AMERICAN		OTHER (Non-White)	TOTAL
1900	18,502 (96.1)	737	(3.8)	20 (.1)	19,259 (100%)
1910	23,778 (95.2)	1,160	(4.6)	40 (.2)	24,978 (100%)
1920	34,657 (93.1)	2,522	(6.8)	55 (.1)	37,234 (100%)
1930	58,334 (92.1)	4,940	(7.8)	63 (.1)	63,338 (100%)
1940	59,308 (90.7)	6,016	(9.2)	65 (.1)	65,389 (100%)
1950	66,498 (90.3)	6,996	(9.5)	147 (.2)	73,641 (100%)
1960	69,769 (88.0)	9,118	(11.5)	396 (.5)	79,283 (100%)
1970	65,773 (82.1)	12,898	(16.1)	1,442 (1.8)	80,113 (100%)
1980	54,911 (74.5)	15,773	(21.4)	3,022 (4.1)	73,706 (100%)
1990	51,684 (70.6)	16,749	(22.9)	4,806 (6.5)	73,239 (100%)

Prior to the creation of District 65 in the early 1950's, Evanston had two separate elementary school districts. School District 75 roughly covered north Evanston, with the middle of Church Street as its southern boundary; and a separate School District 76 roughly covered that portion of Evanston south of the middle of Church Street. In the 1920's, District 75 included one junior high school - Haven, and at least the following K-6 feeder schools: Noyes, Lora Haven (predecessor to Kingsley), Willard, Orrington, Lincolnwood and Foster (the only K-8 school in this District). District 76 included Nichols Junior High and the following K-6 feeder schools: Dewey, Miller, Lincoln, Washington, Oakton and possibly Laramer.

Our sources advised that while there were always small pockets of African-Americans residing in other parts of the city between 1920 - 1960, the vast majority of Evanston's African-Americans resided in the area commonly known as the 5th Ward. This is the area roughly bounded by the Sanitary Canal on the west, the Northwestern train tracks on the east, Church Street on the south and Simpson on the north. While the shape of this geographic boundary is probably more akin to a Hershey's Kiss, for the purposes of this report, we will refer to this area as the "Black

Triangle". Our sources also advised that the attendance area of old District 75's Foster School closely parallelled the boundary lines of the Black Triangle, so much so that the student population of Foster was essentially 99% African-American throughout the School's existence. Our sources described in vivid detail how the boundary lines for Foster School were drawn down the middle of main thoroughfares and around and through alleys, etc. in an attempt to ensure that African-American (and not white) residences were captured within Foster's attendance borders. Indeed, several sources recalled that despite this effort, a small number of whites were included within the Foster School attendance area but, these children were allowed to attend other District 75 and even the separate District 76 schools, depending on the location of their residence. Apparently, there existed an accommodation or arrangement between the two School Districts for this and possibly other purposes; and this may have been the genesis for what we now refer to as the District's "permissive transfer" policy.

As noted, at least as far back as the 1920's, there were small pockets of African-Americans residing in then predominantly white residential areas of Evanston. Our sources advised there were African-Americans residing near the current Kingsley, Noyes, and Nichols Schools and a little west of Orrington School. We were told that while African-American children living in the attendance areas for these schools could indeed attend them, "friendly persuasion" was often brought to bear to encourage them to attend Foster, and many did so. Hence, to the extent that any African-Americans attended the city's north end District 75 schools,it is understood that they were few in number.

While it has been difficult trying to identify the first African-American professionals hired by the school districts and when, several of our sources recall having met their first African-American teacher in the person of one Mr. Charles Bouyer, a physical education instructor at the old Foster School. He was believed to have been the first African-American public school teacher in Evanston and the only African-American teacher in either District 75 or 76 in the late 1920's. His initial date of hire is unknown.

Between 1930 and 1950, our sources advised that a number of African-American teachers trickled into District 75 and that each of them was assigned to Foster. Our sources believe there were two initial "waves" of African-American hirings, the first taking place during the early to mid 1940's and the second during the early to mid 1950's. Among those believed to have been in the first

wave were: Grace Boyd, Willa Brown, Mary Lou Sullivan, Wendell Lanton, Dorothy Brown and Patsy Sloan. Among those believed to have been in the second wave were: Jean Hunter, Alice Robinson, Vera Brownlee, Eddie Lee Sutton, Carolyn White Hunter, Joe Hill, Lorraine Morton, Mabel Williams, Virginia Dews and Doris Williams.

Our sources also believe that the first African-American student teacher in the Evanston public schools was one Mary Perrin, a Northwestern student who completed her student teaching at Foster in the late 1940's. Although District 75 had hired several African-American teachers prior to 1950, it is understood that District 76 had not yet hired an African-American teacher by 1950.

C. SOME POST-1950 HISTORY

Shortly after the two districts were consolidated in the early 1950's, it appears that the new District 65 made its first attempt at placing African-American teachers on previously all white teaching staffs. In this regard, we were told the following:

Around 1955, District 65 was well positioned financially. At that time, it was not uncommon for the District to actually hire and bring to Evanston newly hired teachers in the spring, help them to get acclimated to the District during the spring and place them permanently in the fall. At that time, Superintendent Oscar Chute and his new assistant for personnel, Gordon Anderson, had apparently decided to pursue their first hiring of African-American teachers for permanent placement on previously all white staffs. They apparently planned to hire at least two African-American teachers; and it was contemplated that the two would get acclimated during the spring at Foster and eventually be placed on the then all white staffs. The plan was put in action. Virginia Dews of Columbus, Ohio and Doris Williams of St. Louis, Missouri were hired in the spring. The two were induced to come to Evanston upon the promise that they would be assigned to a previously all white staff in the Fall of 1955. Dews was a 1955 graduate of Ohio State University. Williams had a Masters Degree from Columbia University and about 12 years of teaching experience in St. Louis, Missouri. According to the plan, Dews was to be assigned to Lincolnwood and Williams was to be assigned to Oakton. But there was one big problem with the plan. The administrators talked too much. In an apparent effort to cover their bases, the administrators had "put feelers out" and the word got around in the two school communities that the administration planned to place an African-American teacher on each of the staffs in the fall. The two school communities picked up on the rumor and protested so vigorously to the

administration that the administration decided to keep the two teachers at Foster. Both Virginia Dews and Doris Williams left the District after a year at Foster.

Interestingly, there is still some debate regarding the identify of the first District 65 African-American teacher to be assigned to a previously all white teaching staff. Some give this recognition to Lorraine Morton and others give it to Jean Hunter, both of whom were initially assigned to Foster. Both Morton and Hunter recently retired from the District. Morton's last assignment was as principal of Haven Middle School and Hunter's last assignment was as a physical education teacher at Lincoln School. While the evidence is not conclusive, it appears that both Hunter and Morton are deserving of some recognition. As best we could discern, it appears that around 1956, Hunter was assigned to the then all white staff at Central School as a part time physical education teacher. It further appears that shortly after Hunter was assigned to Central, in the fall of 1957, Lorraine Morton was assigned to Nichols Junior High, becoming the first African-American "classroom teacher" assigned to a previously all white staff. Thus, for what it's worth, we believe that the debate or confusion emanates from the distinction that is oftentimes made between "classroom" and non-classroom teachers. A similar debate continues regarding the High School's African-American hiring record; but to a much lesser extent. The unanimous feedback indicated that Charles Thomas, an Evanstonian, was the first full time African-American teacher hired by the High School in 1955. Others may have preceded Mr. Thomas in a part-time or adjunct capacity; however, their identities are unknown at this time.

Up until the Summer of 1954, no African-American had ever taught in the summer school program of the Evanston public schools. In the Summer of 1954; Lorraine Morton became the first African-American to teach in the District's summer school program.

Shortly after the Hunter and Morton assignments were made, Carolyn Scott Austin became the first African-American hired directly from college and assigned to a previously all white staff. Austin had completed her student teaching at Foster and was given a permanent assignment on the previously all white staff at Oakton. Shortly afterwards, Lavern Mays, an experienced teacher from another school district, broke the color line at Orrington. According to the Table (No. 38) contained in the 1971 Rockefeller Foundation Report, a copy of which is attached hereto, it was not until the fall of 1969 that the last two of the Districts all white teaching staffs (Miller and Walker) were integrated.

While segregated housing was often advanced as the excuse for the segregation of students in the schools, such a rationale could not be applied to teaching assignments. Moreover, while District 65 made some progress in the hiring and assignment of African-American teachers throughout the 1950's, virtually no progress was made at the administrative level.

Exactly how and when Foster School first became a K-8 District 75 school is unknown. However, as best our sources could recall, Foster had been a K-8 school for decades up until the early 1950's. We have previously discussed the fact that at least until the early 1950's, it had been the custom and practice of the District(s) to assign African-American teachers exclusively to Foster. We have also previously discussed the fact that Foster's almost 100% African-American student body came from an attendance area that was tightly drawn around Evanston's Fifth Ward African-American community. We had not previously mentioned however, that a number of our sources also recalled that seventh grade bound African-American Foster students who "tested out" (by achieving a minimum score on then utilized standardized tests) were offered the opportunity to transfer to Nichols or Haven Junior High, depending on their residence; but that only a few ever transferred. Indeed, a few of our sources who tested out and opted to transfer to Haven, noted that that experience was a trying period in their lives because they felt isolated at Haven; while at the same time, some of their African-American peers who remained at Foster felt that they had been abandoned. These circumstances apparently did not go unnoticed by either Evanston's African-American community or its power structure.

It appears that shortly after the two districts were consolidated into District 65, Foster School parents, the local NAACP and others began to put pressure on Superintendent Oscar Chute and the Board to move the seventh and eight graders out of Foster. It appears that the Foster School community was initially primarily concerned with overcrowding at Foster; but because of the District's recalcitrance in addressing the overcrowding, they changed their tactics to emphasize the issue of segregation. In short, while overcrowding was the impetus for the focus on the K-8 configuration, the community felt it was on solid ground in arguing that the purpose and effect of Foster's K-8 configuration was merely to contain (i.e. segregate) African-American children until they reached the high school. Indeed, by virtue of the Foster K-8 configuration, decades of Evanston African-American children never attended schools with white children until they reached E.T.H.S.

A year or two after consolidation, the District changed the Foster School configuration from K-8 to K-6 and the seventh and eighth graders were assigned to either Haven or Nichols, depending on their place of residence. It is believed that those living north of Church Street were assigned to Haven and those living south of Church Street were assigned to Nichols.

Around Halloween 1958, Foster School suffered significant fire damage. As a result, alternative space had to be found for the students. Foster's fourth graders were assigned to Noyes, its fifth graders were assigned to Willard and its sixth graders were sent to Haven, Nichols and Skiles. We were told that one of the most striking things about these transfers was that instead of truly "integrating" these students into the majority white populations of the receiving schools, the children and their teachers were kept intact and separate from those at the receiving schools. This "separateness" was maintained throughout the school years of 1958 and 1959. During this two plus year period, the future of Foster was heavily debated. The African-American community had insisted that Foster be repaired, taking the position that their churches, Foster School and the Emerson Street YMCA were the only institutions in their community over which they had any degree of influence. Foster was re-opened in the Fall of 1960.

Very few things happen in a vacuum and there is little doubt that the Evanston community was affected or impacted by a number of major events and developments which occurred during the late 1940's and 1950's. Some of these events and developments included, but were not necessarily limited to the following:

1945 - 1966	Period of the African national independence movements.
1945	President Franklin D. Roosevelt died in office; and Vice-President Harry S. Truman succeeded Roosevelt as President.
1945	World War II ended.
1947	President Harry Truman's Committee on Civil Rights issued a report formally condemning racial injustice in America in the widely quoted report "To Secure These Rights".
1947	Jackie Robinson, a UCLA graduate, became the first African-American baseball player to play in the formerly all white major league.
1948	Harry S. Truman was elected President of the United States.

1948 The United States Supreme Court in Shelly v. Kraemer ruled that federal and state courts could not enforce racially restrictive housing covenants.

1948 President Harry Truman issued Executive Order 9981 outlawing segregation and discrimination in the armed forces.

1949 Congress passed the National Housing Act of 1949. The guidelines utilized to implement the Act, not only stimulated new home construction in the suburbs; but in addition, recommended that "the stability of neighborhoods" be preserved. These guidelines were often interpreted as discouraging integrated housing.

1950 Ralph Bunch, an African-American, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts in mediating a peace between Arabs and Jews in the middle east.

1950 Chuck Cooper and Nat "Sweetwater" Clifton became the first African-Americans to play basketball in the NBA.

1951 The Korean Conflict began and for the first time in the country's history, African-Americans and whites were assigned to integrated fighting units.

1952 Dwight D. Eisenhower was elected President of the United States.

1954 In the Summer of 1954, Evanston was host to the International Assembly of the World Council of Churches. Many claim that the World Council, an international organization, used this occasion to break down the remaining vestiges of discrimination on the part of certain lodging and eating establishments in the City.

1954 In May 1954, the United States Supreme Court in Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, ruled that the separation of children by race in the public schools violated the U.S. Constitution.

1955 On December 1, 1955, African-American domestic worker, Rosa Parks, refused to give up her bus seat to a white man and was arrested. This began the Montgomery, Alabama Bus Boycott (1955 - 1956) which is oftentimes marked as the beginning of the modern civil rights movement.

1956 On March 11, 1956, 96 Southern U.S. Congressmen drafted a proclamation in which they challenged the right of the Supreme Court "to encroach upon" the segregated public school systems prevalent in their states.

1957 The Prayer Pilgrimage to Washington, D.C. - the first large-scale African-American demonstration for civil rights in the post-war era took place on May 17th.

1957 The Little Rock, Arkansas (Central High) school crisis began. President Eisenhower sent federal troops to Little Rock to enforce a federal court order providing for the admission of African-American students.

1957 The Civil Rights Act of 1957 was passed by Congress. This Act created the U.S. Civil Rights Commission and represented the first comprehensive federal legislation in this area in the 20th Century.

1960 The Sit-in Movement was initiated by African-American college students in the south, and it was closely followed by the Freedom Rides under the sponsorship of a number of African-American and other pro-civil rights organizations.

1960 Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., an African-American U.S. Congressman from New York City, became Chairman of the powerful House Education and Labor Committee. Powell who came to Congress in 1945 had become notorious for among other things, attempting to affix an amendment on federal legislation - to deny federal funds to any project or program where discrimination existed.

The foundation for the events and developments which would take place in the 1960's was clearly put in place in the 1950's.

D. SOME SELECTED POST 1960 HISTORY

1. SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION (BOARD MEMBERSHIP)

While the Evanston City Council would receive its first African-American alderman, Edwin B. Jourdain, in 1931 (largely as a result of the overwhelming African-American electorate in the 5th Ward), it would not be until thirty-three years later that an African-American would be elected to a school board in Evanston. In 1964, Dan Phillips was elected to the Evanston Townhship High School (District 202) Board. Three years later in 1967, District 65 received its first African-American school board member, when Grant Shockley, Ph.D. was elected.

Both Evanston school districts have had seven Board Members for many decades. Board Members have always been elected at large or district-wide. For some forty years or more up through the early 1970s, there existed an organizational phenomena in Evanston called "the Caucus". The apparent purpose of the Caucus was to screen, recruit and decide upon a list "worthy" school board candidates. It is further understood that Caucus membership was largely drawn from well established local organizations which historically had few or no African-American members. Much as the Candidate Nominating Committee ("CNC") "qualified" rating does today, Caucus listing or endorsement carried a great deal of significance with the electorate. In most school board elections over its 40 plus year history, the Caucus "list" of candidates went uncontested. It is understood that both Phillips and Shockley made the caucus list. It is further understood however, that although many had run, up until the mid-1960's, only two

"independent" candidates gained school board seats without Caucus support. Sometime in the early 1960's, one of Evanston's oldest historically African-American social and civic clubs, the Toppers, applied for membership in the Caucus and its application was accepted. The Toppers became the first African-American club admitted to membership in the Caucus; however, apparently, its membership was short lived. It appears that a short period of time after the Toppers gained membership, another Evanston based African-American club, the Northshore Twelve, applied for membership. Apparently, the Northshore Twelve application generated a lot of debate among the Caucus' membership and throughout the community. According to our sources, it was at that time that the Caucus first decided that it would establish a "minimum membership number criteria" for any organization seeking membership and that the minimum number would be fifty. Our sources indicated that the Caucus also dispatched a well known African-American (who may have been a Caucus delegate at the time) to meet with members of the Northshore Twelve. According to our sources, the African-American emissary defended the new rule and attempted to explain the Caucus' rationale. We were also told that the emissary suggested to the Northshore Twelve that they need merely pad their membership rolls to show a membership of at least fifty people. The Northshore Twelve which had less than fifty members at that time refused to increase their membership and their application was denied by the Caucus. Additionally, we were told that the Caucus decided to apply the fifty member rule retroactively and that the Topper's Club membership was rescinded.

It is understood that other largely African-American organizations such as the Foster School PTA, may have subsequently been admitted to membership in the Caucus; however, it appears that by the early 1970's, the Caucus ceased to be a factor in Evanston school board campaigns and disbanded.

Since the mid 1960's, there has been at least one or two African-Americans on each of the Evanston school boards; however, rarely if ever have two African-Americans been elected to a Board at the same time prior to 1991. In November 1991, two African-Americans were elected to the District 65 School Board; and as a result of that election, District 65 now has three (3) African-American school board members - believed to be another first for Evanston.

2. SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION (ADMINISTRATORS)

In 1960, Joseph E. Hill became the first "official" African-American appointed to an

administrative position in District 65. At that time, he was appointed to the position of assistant principal of the old Foster School. We say "official" because several of our sources indicated that Mr. Charles Bouyer became sort of an "unofficial" assistant principal of old Foster School for several years, although he was never formally given that title. Hill served as assistant principal at Foster until 1966. In 1965, Hill also served as the District's first director of the Head Start Program. In 1966, Hill became the first African-American principal of a public school in Evanston when he was appointed to the principalship at Foster. Bob Dawkins, current Director of Pupil Services, succeeded Hill as assistant principal at Foster. In the spring of 1967, Hill was appointed to the newly created post of Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, becoming the first African-American central office administrator in District 65. After serving as both Deputy Superintendent and Interim Superintendent during the early 1970's, Hill became the District's first African-American Superintendent in 1975.

When Dr. Gregory Coffin succeeded Oscar Chute as the District 65 Superintendent around 1966, what could only be described as a radical departure from the past, began to take place at the administrative level in District 65. Almost immediately upon arrival, not only did Coffin began to actively and aggressively recruit and hire African-American teachers; but perhaps more significantly, Coffin began to place significant numbers of African-Americans in "apprenticeship" positions which would eventually lead to positions of leadership in the District. For example, during the period between 1965 - 1975, Coffin and his aid and successor, Joe Hill, placed African-Americans in such positions as: assistant principal, associate principal, coordinator and director. Some of the persons included among these appointees were: Ed Pate (assistant principal at Chute); Charles Moody and Jerry Floyd (assistant principals at Skiles); Earl Davis (assistant principal at Nichols); Larry Head (assistant principal at Haven); Bessie Rhodes (Central Office Curriculum Coordinator); Laval Wilson (In-Service Coordinator and assistant at various schools); Elmore Johnson (assistant principal at Oakton); Clara Pate (Intern); Bob Dawkins (Director of Pupil Services); and Mrs. Sutton and Valerie Summers (directors of Head Start). A number of these individuals as well as others eventually became principals in the District including: Charles Thomas (principal at Skiles after leaving ETHS); Dr. Dorothy Maggett (principal at Skiles); Dr. Byron Hooks (principal at Skiles and later at Haven); Elmore Johnson (principal at Walker); Bessie Rhodes (principal at Miller); Ed Pate (principal at College Hill and later principal at Chute); Laval Wilson and Jerry Floyd (principals at Central); Warren Cherry (principal at Central and later principal at Lincoln); and Clara Pate (principal at College Hill and

later at Oakton). In this connection, we were advised that during the early years of desegregation ('68 or '69) one Mr. Bonnie Gillespie was assigned to Lincolnwood as an assistant or associate principal on the occasion of some degree of racial strife at the school and that Mr. Gillespie remained at Lincolnwood for a year or two. It appears however, that Mr. Gillespie's short term administrative appointment at Lincolnwood was the only such appointment ever made at one of the three north end elementary feeder schools.

3. THE FORMAL DESEGREGATION OF DISTRICT 65 SCHOOLS

As indicated in the main report, prior to implementation of school desegregation in the fall of 1967, a number of steps were taken by the District 65 School Board in the early 1960's before it adopted a formal desegregation plan in November 1966. Perhaps chief among those actions, was the Board's December 1964 resolution of intent to eliminate de facto segregation in the schools. While this and subsequent Board actions leading to desegregation is often alluded to and lauded as a purely "voluntary" step on the part of the Board, it was the universal opinion of our sources, that this grossly mischaracterizes the events which occurred. Indeed, it was the almost universal opinion of our sources that the Board's actions could have only been considered "voluntary" if voluntariness merely meant that the decision(s) to desegregate were not imposed by a Court Order. In this regard, our sources reminded us that "Civil Rights" issues were at the forefront of the national agenda during this period, unlike any other time since the post-Civil War reconstruction period. In addition, Evanston had not escaped the phenomena of protests, marches, rallies, forums, etc. which are so often only associated with the South. During the same period school desegregation was being debated and discussed in Evanston, open housing, equal employment, public accommodations and other related issues were very much on the Evanston agenda. Some of the phenomena, events, and forces which our sources claim coalesced to pressure the Board into action included, but were not limited to the following:

- Civil Rights enforcement and the need for new Civil rights legislation was a major issue in the 1960 presidential campaign, which resulted in the election of John F. Kennedy;

- Widespread media coverage of civil rights confrontations, demonstrations and events all over the nation brought about a new awareness of existing problems in Evanston;

- The expansion of the war in Vietnam and the increased deaths and injuries of young African-Americans and others on the battlefield added moral weight to the cry for civil rights enforcement and protection;

- The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People ("NAACP") and its legal arm began to expand its school desegregation efforts to the north where de facto (as opposed to de jure) segregation was widely practiced;

- The Civil Rights Community began to put pressure on the national administration and the United States Justice Department to expand school desegregation enforcement efforts to the north;

- The Civil Rights Act of 1964 (which had been proposed by President Kennedy before his death in 1963) was passed. This Act among other things, authorized the U.S. Attorney General and individuals to sue any school board where there was cause to believe that children were being denied the equal protection of the law. In addition, the Act required the U.S. Office of Education to monitor compliance by school districts receiving federal financial aid;

- The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was passed. This Act in large measure was responsible for restoring the right to vote to millions of African-Americans (primarily in the South) which had been given to them by the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1870 and taken away again beginning with the Hayes-Tilden Compromise in 1876;

- Then new federal local school aid programs, such as those included in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (which poured millions of dollars into local schools for a vast array of programs) were passed by the U.S. Congress with conditions prohibiting discrimination and segregation; and

- Local Evanston civil rights groups such as the Evanston Branch of the NAACP and many like minded organizations and individuals (of all races) were pressuring the school board to desegregate the schools.

Equally as significant according to our sources, was the fact that during this same time period, both Evanston School Districts (65 and 202) were asking the public to support new bond issues necessary to finance the construction or expansion of school facilities because of increasing enrollment. Our sources advised that an inter-racial coalition of local groups and individuals advised both School Boards that if immediate action was not taken to desegregate the schools, those groups and persons would work hard to defeat the then planned bond referenda. Our sources also claimed that even District 202 became an "ally" of sorts by taking the position that the ball was really in District 65's court because the high school was already desegregated.

As our sources reminisced about former Superintendent Dr. Gregory Coffin, and his coming to District 65 around 1966 to lead the implementation of the desegregation plan in the fall of 1967, they universally described Coffin as "a man ahead of his times." It is understood that Coffin was

a New Englander from the Boston area and from a heritage which included strong anti-slavery or abolitionist ties. As noted elsewhere, while most of the thrust and mechanisms leading to desegregation were put into place under the leadership of Superintendent Oscar Chute, before implementation, Chute had announced his plans to retire prior to actual implementation and accordingly, implementation leadership was left in the hands of Coffin.

Our sources claim that Coffin was a very aggressive, candid and somewhat outspoken individual. In short, he was not necessarily the type to wait for the Board to lead and direct him; but rather, the type to initiate bold action on his own initiative. Our sources give much of the credit for the increased numbers of African-American teachers hired and administrators placed throughout the District in the late 1960's to Coffin. As a result, it appears that Coffin had gained the strong support and respect of a very large segment of the African-American community, as well as from the progressive white community. We were advised that among other things, Coffin was responsible for initiating contacts between African-American and whites on a social level which had previously been unheard of in Evanston. They said he hosted parties and other social affairs (and encouraged others to do so) where African-Americans and whites came together as equals and in an harmonious atmosphere.

Our sources advised on the other hand, that a large segment of the Evanston community was not pleased with Coffin or his management style. Their almost universal perception was that a large segment of the community felt that Coffin was "moving too fast" in the area of desegregation and on all that it entailed. They said for example, that Coffin was interested in moving beyond just mixing bodies and intended to address curriculum and other issues which he deemed appropriate. Eventually, Dr. Coffin and his tenure as superintendent would become a political issue in the Community.

In 1970 (some claim after a Board meeting of sorts in Florida), the District 65 School Board decided not to renew Coffin's contract after June, 1970. According to our sources, those opposed to Coffin used such terms as: "arrogant," "abrasive," "wouldn't listen," "wouldn't play ball," etc. to describe their reasons for opposition to him. The African-American and progressive white communities by and large interpreted the Board's decision as an anti-desegregation or racist move.

The April, 1970 school board election (for three seats) would become the vehicle for resolving Coffin's future as the incumbent Board subsequently agreed not to seek a new superintendent until after the election. The Caucus supported a list of three candidates who were pledged to uphold the incumbent Board's previous decision not to renew Coffin's contract. An inter-racial coalition organized under the name "Citizens for 65" supported three candidates who were pledged to retain Coffin. Finally, a third group under the name "Coalition of Independent Voters," supported a slate consisting of three African-Americans who were also of the view that Coffin should be retained. Among the three slates, there was a total of five African-American candidates. The April 1970 school board election generated the greatest voter turnout for a school board election in the history of Evanston with 26,738 votes. The election results were very close; however, the Caucus supported candidates (which included an African-American) won by a majority of 51% of the votes cast and the decision to replace Coffin was upheld by the new board. A not insubstantial number of African-Americans and whites reacted angrily to the election results. There were protest marches around the homes of several of the school board members. The Ad-Hoc Committee of Concerned Black Parents led a boycott of the schools. "Freedom Schools" staffed by among others, striking white and African-American teachers, were organized at several churches; and there were organized boycotts of several businesses which were felt to be hostile to African-Americans. This ended the District's "Coffin Era"; however, our sources felt that Coffin's legacy remains very much in evidence throughout the District to this day.

4. SCHOOL CLOSINGS

As the main report describes in detail, over the last fifteen or so years, fluctuations in student enrollment have necessitated the closing and reconfiguration of the District's schools from time to time.

In part B., pages 3 - 4 above, we discussed in some detail the historical patterns of housing segregation in the City in general and in the 5th Ward in particular. As indicated, for many decades, the vast majority of Evanston's African-American community resided in a geographic area referred to above as "the Black Triangle." This area was bounded on the west by the Sanitary Canal, on the east by the Northwestern train tracks, on the north at Simpson Avenue and on the south initially by Church Street and overtime by Main Street. Since at least 1930, a majority of Evanston's African-American population has resided within this area.

Although by 1960, one or more African-American students may have been enrolled in each of the District's elementary schools, the majority of the District's African-American students were enrolled in the following elementary schools at the following percentages: Foster - 99%, Dewey - 66%, Noyes - 33% and Central - 33%. A review of the past 15 years of decisions made by the District with respect to desegregation efforts, school closings, etc., reveals that only one of the elementary schools which had historically served large numbers of African-American children survives - Dewey. Foster, Noyes and Central have all been closed as attendance area schools. Moreover, it is perceived by many that other newer schools having significant African-American student populations, such as Skiles and Kingsley, were unfairly closed or changed. When one compares the fate of the closed and reconfigured schools (which served large numbers of African-American children for decades) to that of the three north end schools (i.e. Willard, Lincolnwood and Orrington) which had historically served hardly any African-Americans, there appears to be a striking contrast in decision making. All three of these schools survive and have escaped closings even when one or more them have been recommended for closing by the District's superintendent. While it is always difficult to establish "racial motivation" for such things as school closings, in light of the city's public school history, many find it difficult to escape the conclusion that past school closing decisions were to more than a small degree, influenced by race. Indeed, we believe that in some respects, the LRPC's recommendation that preference be given to the Fifth Ward as a location for any future new school construction is an acknowledgement of this legacy of racially inequitable school closing decisions.

E. CLOSING

There were a number of events and developments not discussed here, which our sources encouraged us to pursue and record; however, lack of time and resources simply did not permit us to do so. We hope that others who follow will do as much as possible in order to increase our knowledge and understanding of each other.

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Table 38
Integrated Faculty in District 65 Schools

School	1966 Yes	1966 No	1967 Yes	1967 No	1968 Yes	1968 No	1969 Yes	1969 No	1970 Yes	1970 No
Elementary School										
Central	X		X		X		X		X	
College Hill		X		X	X		X		X	
Dawes	X		X		X		X		X	
King Lab	X		X		X		X		X	
Kingsley	X		X		X		X		X	
Lincoln		X	X		X		X		X	
Lincolnwood	X		X		X		X		X	
Miller		X		X		X	X		X	
Noyes	X		X		X		X		X	
Oakton	X		X		X		X		X	
Orrington	X			X	X		X		X	
Timber Ridge		X	X		X		X		X	
Walker		X		X		X	X		X	
Washington	X		X		X		X		X	
Willard		X	X		X		X		X	
Middle Schools										
Chute			X		X		X		X	
Haven	X		X		X		X		X	
Nichols	X		X		X		X		X	
Skiles	X		X		X		X		X	